10/13/69

Dear Paul,

As you may recall from the copies of my letters to the Archives, over the years I have been trying to get from them some way of knowing when what has been declassified. I have raised the question in person also, on a number of occasions with Johnson and with Shoads at the lunch break of the trial in Judge Halleck's court.

Often when he sees me, Johnson visible shakes, especially if it is after some particular nastiness on their part, in which, inevitably, he figures. When I raised the question for the last time with him, he was unsteady. When he offered to mark up my list, I knew it was impossible. Therefore, I grabbed on the offer immediately, because it would be their documenting their own dishonesty and because it also might yield something constructive. I knew, for he'd just told me, that nothing new had been made available for a very long time. They also told me the "review" reported to me by Vinson was news to them.

I should have accompanied the list with an explanation.

Your suggestion, however, is an excellent one, for when they refuse to give me what they have already told me is declassified, it will look very good (or bad, depending on point of view), in court.

Your reference to the index to CD 7 reminds me, all my copies of all my work on that seem to have gotten out. When you see Hal, I believe I sent him a copy I typed from the index. If I want one in that form and he has it, I may ask you to copy it. At the time I did that, about the middle or 1966, I had the impression much of the suppression in this file was to protect the radical right.

If major discrepancies turn up, between the list Simmons marked, which is much more extensive that what he wrote out, and your lists, aside from files like CD 7, where I have checked them and there is a sheet for each thing withheld, I'd like to be armed with it for trial. Everything in 7 that is denied, by the way, is by FBI order, not the Archives or the Commission.

Your understanding is identical with the one given me, that the X meant the entire file was withheld.

The nice thing here is that they gave this deception to my lawyer, as I had arranged in advance. Therefore, I will not be alone as a witness, should we be able to go into it, as I'd hope and expect.

Because I expect to go there Friday, I do now want to give them a chance to respond verbally, so I will hold off. This will give you time to suggest which of the withheld pages of CDs 7 and 75 you'd like me to seek.

Gary is very impressed with what he's found at Mary's. Brief explanation from him today. He may also be getting Betzner's pix. Seems to have made out well there, too.

Best regards,